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INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ACQUISITION
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27 April 1944

TO: Members of the Interdepartmental Committee and
Far Eastern Advisory Group

FROM: Ensign Frederick G. Kilgour, USNR *F.G.K.*

SUBJECT: Excerpts from recent reports from George Kates in Chungking

In my memorandum No. 135, I mentioned that Mr. Hsieh Nan-Kuang had given to our Mr. Ch'en two publications on Formosan materials. These are numbered and titled as follows:

A-920: A Collection of Speeches on the Formosa Problem

A-922: A Summary of the Present Conditions of Formosa

We are sending these as originals to you. If they are considered of enough importance to film, this can be done at your end.

I hope that they are the forerunners of others, possibly of more interest and importance.

Just a word or two on the bulk and range of further books to be used as trading materials.

I have checked on this material with the Ambassador himself, and providing we do not run into excessive weight -- and this we can watch at both ends -- our present arrangements are not disapproved by him. He does suggest, however, that if the weight grows, we may tear off the covers of books to lighten them slightly. If this were done I should like you to save enough of the printed cloth of the cover to enable me to make a new label if we rebind here. I do not anticipate personally that this will be necessary if we continue as at present; and there is no doubt that if a book is to be presented to a high official, it makes a better impression to have it arrive intact and in its pristine freshness from a bookstore in America.

I hope to send you from time to time reports as to which books have been most popular. The broad objective, however, is sure to be readily apprehended by you. We are all, ourselves, near a state of intellectual stultification here because we are so far from the great world, and reading material is so extremely difficult to procure. This is even more the case, then, with those Chinese who read English; and this is what gives these materials their special -- scarcity -- value.

Part of the success of these original books, rather than microfilm, as a trading medium is also due to the fact that they can be used easily, passed from hand to hand and -- I suspect -- can often be quoted from, perhaps eventually even for the information of the Generalissimo himself.

If you could see, as I do, as I do, a certain look in the eyes of the people whom I go to see when they take books from me, you would agree fully, I am sure, on the advisability of spending some effort in maintaining this flow to us.

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